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# Planning Template/Prompting Tool

## 5 A Day Vision 2004

*A comprehensive, coordinated national campaign infrastructure is in place to increase fruit and vegetable consumption to 5 A Day for 75% of Americans by 2010*

The 5 A Day program, as you know it, is expanding. We are putting a plan in place to raise fruit and vegetable consumption in America to record levels. We are expanding the national 5 A Day program from a partnership of the Produce for Better Health Foundation and the National Cancer Institute to a much broader collaboration which also includes American Cancer Society, the Assn. of State and Territorial Directors of Health Promotion and Public Health Education, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Alliance for Nutrition and Activity, Produce Marketing Assn., US Department of Agriculture, the United Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Assn., among others.

We've initiated a strategic planning process through a steering committee of the partner organizations. We have identified five strategic priorities to move us toward our vision:

- State/region/community programs
- Communications
- Environmental/policy change
- Research/evaluation
- Infrastructure/capacity building/leadership

It's no coincidence that state/region/community programs are listed as the first priority. An effective grassroots program will be the difference between success and failure. The public health stakes are too high to risk failure. Consequently, we are investing in our grassroots infrastructure. As an important first step, we want to first help you get organized with your own planning process and later with resources, generated from the national planning process, to support you.

This Planning Template/Prompting Tool was developed to help you begin or fine-tune a planning process for your state or community. It leads you through a series of cueing questions about your 5 A Day programs and presents options for organizing strategic thinking and planning. Before you do anything, we encourage you to read through this document in its entirety.

Ask yourself what part of this prompting tool is relevant to expanding and/or improving upon my 5 A Day plan? What we offer are options. Choose only the steps that work for you. We look forward to hearing of your success. Your success will be our success.

**Elizabeth Pivonka, Ph.D., RD**

*Chair, National 5 A Day Partnership Steering Committee*



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### Supportive Resources

Throughout this document there are references to useful resources. These resources are available in your training packet and are also available on the 5 A Day Partnership Website ([5adaypartners.com](http://5adaypartners.com)). The username is *5aday* and the password is *produce*. The materials listed below will be useful throughout the planning process:

- Crosswalk for 5 A Day Strategic Planning
- The National 5 A Day Plan
- Writing SMART Objectives
- 5 A Day Alignment for States/Regions/Communities
- Effective Meeting Facilitation: The Sine Qua Non of Planning
- NUPAWG Summary of Work Group Sessions
- Critical Factors for Successful Planning
- Action Plan Form
- Tips for Action Planning
- 5 A Day Partners

## GETTING STARTED

### Some key initial questions...

Do I already have a plan?

If yes:

#### 1. Is it a living, working guide for your 5 A Day program?

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#### 2. Is 5 A Day at the heart of the plan?

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#### 3. Can 5 A Day be expanded or improved upon?

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If no, think through the following:

#### 1. What are my existing programs?

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#### 2. Where can I drop in 5 A Day strategies and messages?

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#### 3. Who are potential partners (internally and externally) to expand my impact with fruit and vegetable consumption?

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### Getting ready for 5 A Day planning

The benefit of a strategic planning process is as much about process as a written planning document. The process allows you the opportunity to bring in others who can benefit from a successful 5 A Day program or who bring to the planning table fresh thinking and skills you'll need to successfully implement your plan. Involvement in planning nurtures ownership in and commitment to the success of 5 A Day.

It's important for all of us to remember that there is no "perfect" plan. There typically are not many ah-ha experiences. Like the management process itself, planning is typically a series of small moves that together keep a team moving forward together towards a vision. What's important is to start simple but start. Do the best you can at thinking "strategically" but learn as you go so the next time around the process is enriched by both your experience and your successes. Once you have your plan in place, get started with implementing it and meet frequently to monitor what's working and what isn't so you can adjust the plan accordingly. Start simple but start.

### These questions will help you get started ...

- 1. Where does 5 A Day interface with other programs? (Reference: *Crosswalk for 5 A Day Strategic Planning and NUPAWG Summary*)**

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- 2. Who among the potential partners should I involve in the planning process (Who will have the most stake in our success and who can make 5 A Day most successful with or without funding? Do we have a good mix of different skills/perspectives?)**

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- 3. What within the national plan is relevant/helpful to developing my plan? (Reference: *National 5 A Day Plan*)**

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- 4. When and where am I going to hold a planning meeting(s)?**

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- 5. What do I need to do to hold a successful meeting? (Reference: *Critical Factors for Successful Planning and Effective Meeting Facilitation: The Sine Qua Non of Planning*)**

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### Getting started with a planning team

In simple terms, planning is about asking and answering four basic questions:

- **Where are we now?**
- **Where do we want to be?**
- **How are we going to get there together?**
- **How do we measure our progress?**

Your planning meeting(s) should be organized around answering these questions.

### Where are we now?

#### STEP 1

Review the five questions listed below and decide what information/resources you will need. Gather the resources and information prior to your first team meeting. Develop your planning team agenda based upon your assessment and the 4 basic planning questions. Assess the group at the beginning of your first planning meeting to find out if they are ready to initiate a strategic planning process for 5 A Day (question #1). This leads to greater understanding and agreement on the intent/goal of your planning. You may also want to include in your strategic thinking the five national 5 A Day priorities, listed below in bold print under Step 2.

- 1. Do we want to initiate a plan to support the national 5 A Day vision, overriding principles, priorities, state/community goal, and objectives? (Reference: 5 A Day Alignment for States/Regions/Communities)**

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- 2. Do we accept the State/Regional/Community Goal as our state's 2004 Goal?**

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- 3. What is our current status? (Whom do we reach, with what, where and when?)**

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- 4. Where can we drop in 5 A Day?**

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- 5. Where can we expand our impact collectively, leveraging our current efforts?**

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### STEP 2

The following cueing questions are organized around the 5 national priorities. Look at each of these priorities to assess how and where 5 A Day may fit in your state or community.

#### State/region/community programs

**1. Where and how can we hook into existing programs and systems?**

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**2. Where are other community assets that could help advance 5 A Day?**

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#### Communication

**1. Where and how can we hook into existing programs and systems?**

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**2. Who are the gatekeepers to carry our message (e.g., policy makers, educators, health professionals, media, retailers)?**

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**3. Where are we already reaching these gatekeepers? Can we develop a 5 A Day communication strategy to tap into the audiences they reach daily?**

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#### Environmental/policy change

**1. What are we currently doing to create an environment that encourages healthy eating?**

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**2. Is there an opportunity to incorporate 5 A Day?**

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- 3 What might we do to support a more positive environment for increased fruit and vegetable consumption?**

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- 4. Where can we piggyback on current policy change efforts to create a more positive environment for increased consumption of fruits and vegetables?**

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### Research/evaluation

- 1. How do we currently evaluate 5 A Day efforts?**

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- 2. What tools/ systems are available to expand/improve our evaluation?**

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- 3. Is there a more effective way to evaluate if we pull our resources together?**

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### Infrastructure/capacity building

- 1. Where are we now? (e.g., organizationally, programmatically, level of support, systems...)**

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- 2. What resources do we have in place? (e.g., personnel, systems, funding...)**

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- 3. Where should we focus our attention to make the biggest difference next year in enhancing our local effectiveness? Looking ahead:**

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**A. Where do we need help in building our capacity?**

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**B. What can we put in place (e.g., learn/build skills) to be more effective in the future?**

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**C. What can we do to build or enhance a strong coalition?**

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**D. How can we work more effectively with industry?**

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**E. Where can we find funds to support our plan?**

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### STEP 3

An assessment of the strengths and weaknesses or vulnerabilities of the 5 A Day effort is another important component of the assessment process. Acknowledging and writing down strengths, particularly those underutilized, and vulnerabilities, especially those that create major difficulties if left ignored, contribute to the “where we are now” database. Analyzing strengths and weaknesses represent an internal review. It is also important to look at trends and changes occurring in the “outside” environment to determine future opportunities or potential threats to the program.

### SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) Analysis:

**1. What are the 6 or 7 main internal strengths of the 5 A Day program?**

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**2. What are the 6 or 7 main internal vulnerabilities of the 5 A Day program?**

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### 3. What are the most likely external opportunities that we can build on in the future?

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### 4. What are potential external threats that we need to address to assure our future success?

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### Where do we want to be? Developing a One-Year Plan

Deciding on the priority objectives for the first year plan is sometimes tough and yet very important. It sets the foundation and momentum for future efforts. This is why the 2004 Vision for the 5 A Day partnership is focused on building the campaign infrastructure. The same is true with the State/Regional and Community Goal. So, even though infrastructure is the last assessment question, it's probably the first planning priority. In establishing priority objectives, review all the assessment data you have developed and then, building on your strengths, determine which efforts are feasible and will make the greatest contribution to your 2004 goal.

Think through:

### 1. What are the gaps between our 2004 Goals and where we are today?

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### 2. What specifically can we accomplish in one year to create a foundation to begin filling the gaps between where we are today and where we want to be? (Review the assessment data your team developed with particular attention to infrastructure). In selecting your objectives, run them through the "SMART" assessment to check relevance, achievability and measurability. (Reference: *Writing SMART Objectives*)

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### 3. What are the major strategies, which will lead to achieving each objective?

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### How are we going to get there together?

Planning is not a magic wand; saying or writing something does not make it so. In other words, commitment and action must accompany any plan if you are to achieve results. Therefore documenting action plans, assignments and timelines for carrying out each step is critical for success.

These prompting questions help identify who will do what and when.

#### 1. Who's going to be responsible for each part of the plan?

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#### 2. What are the tasks?

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#### 3. When will they be completed? (Reference: *Action Plan Form and Tips for Action Planning*)

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### How do we measure our progress?

Developing a feedback system to track progress against your objectives is also critical to keep you focused and moving forward. This is an area of particular importance, as plans not routinely evaluated for progress end up sitting unused on a shelf.

Think through:

#### 1. What kind of support mechanism do we need to assure success?

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#### 2. What support is available? (e.g., mentors, coaches, national resources)

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#### 3. What system/process shall we use to check progress and make adjustments in the plan where needed?

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#### 4. When and how often should we revisit our plan?

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### Additional thoughts

Planning is an ongoing process of determining where we are, where we want to go and how we are going to get there together. It's easy to get lost in the process. When you do, back up for a minute and reorient yourself to where you are in the planning process by examining the big four planning questions:

- **Where are we now?**
- **Where do we want to be?**
- **How are we going to get there, together?**
- **How do we measure our progress?**

You may find it useful to build a network of other 5 A Day partners from other states to learn from and build on each other's experiences.

*Remember – Start simple, but start.*